

## Rising Star: Latham's Matthew Dewitz

By Theresa Schliep

*Law360 (June 28, 2022, 2:03 PM EDT)* -- Latham & Watkins LLP partner Matthew Dewitz advised T-Mobile's blockbuster \$59 billion merger with Sprint, Endeavor Group Holdings' acquisition of Ultimate Fighting Championship and Ortho Clinical Diagnostics in its acquisition by COVID-19 test-maker Quidel, earning him a spot among the tax attorneys under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

### ***HIS MOST NOTABLE DEAL:***

Endeavor's acquisition of martial arts promotion company UFC is one of Dewitz's most notable due its sheer complexity, he said. Private equity-backed Endeavor was founded as a Hollywood talent agency, but has expanded through acquisitions, and went public in April 2021 after raising \$511 million.



Dewitz said the Endeavor-UFC transaction was essentially multiple deals in one, and involved Endeavor's initial public offering, a private investment in public equity and a "devilishly complicated" mergers and acquisition transaction that involved Endeavor's purchase — at the same time as its IPO — of the portion of the UFC that it didn't possess at that time.

"It wasn't the biggest deal by value that I've ever worked on, although it was very big," Dewitz said. "But it was multiples more complicated than anything else I've probably ever worked on."

"All of those different pieces coming together made it a deal with many, many faces and many complexities," he added.

### ***OTHER INTERESTING DEALS:***

Dewitz's work involves many different types of companies, spanning telecommunications, sports and entertainment, and implicates complicated aspects of transactional tax. The T-Mobile-Sprint transaction is notable for its size alone, with the \$59 billion transaction among Dewitz's biggest by value, he said.



**Matthew Dewitz**  
Latham

**Age:** 38  
**Home base:** New York  
**Position:** Partner  
**Law school:** New York University School of Law  
**First job after law school:** Associate at Latham

Those companies first unveiled plans to merge in April 2018, and the deal was blessed by a D.C. federal judge after receiving some scrutiny from the U.S. Department of Justice and state attorneys general who had competition concerns about the deal.

Dewitz said it's interesting and somewhat nerve-wracking to work on a deal with so much name recognition, not to mention the substance of the transactional tax matters underpinning it.

"It was personally interesting and satisfying, and of course difficult and challenging from a technical perspective," Dewitz said.

Also of note is the pending Ortho-Quidel transaction, in which COVID-19 and flu test company Quidel Corp. acquired Ortho Clinical Diagnostics Holdings PLC in a \$6 billion transaction. Quidel makes a large number of the COVID-19 tests available for consumers.

"The deal was very interesting from a technical perspective, but it was also incredible to work on something that was so topical in the world at that time," Dewitz said. "We were just working on the deal, but these companies at the same time were manufacturing these tests that were critical to keeping the world moving. It kind of puts my work in perspective."

Dewitz noted that although his job as an attorney "might be more steps removed than the people who are on the front line actually manufacturing the medical test and things like that," it's cool to be able to facilitate that work even from a distance.

"That's why we're here and why we do what we do — hopefully to position the companies in a way to be more successful and more productive in the world," Dewitz said.

#### ***WHAT MOTIVATES HIM:***

Dewitz said he got into transactional tax law because of some professors he had in law school. He didn't enter New York University School of Law intending to enter tax, but took an elective his first year that was one of those experiences he said "changes your path." And he found he excelled at the practice area.

"I really have to thank those teachers, plus my mentors at the law firm when I first started and who were willing to put up with me for the first few years when I knew nothing," Dewitz said. "Tax is such a big learning curve."

As far as what gets him through the daily grind, Dewitz said he's motivated by the difficulty posed by the work. He enjoys being challenged, and particularly gets a kick out of those days when he has few meetings and can spend his time chewing over problems, he said.

"My favorite are the days where I have a problem, a tax problem that I can't solve and that I have a feeling there's an answer for," Dewitz said.

And he said that if there's a problem, he'll keep working toward a solution.

"When you finally have that breakthrough and finally have the 'aha' solution, the elegant solution, it's kind of nerdy, but that's kind of it — that's the most gratifying," Dewitz added.

***HIS PROUDEST MOMENT:***

Latham has a robust pro bono practice, according to Dewitz, who said the training and resources it provides to its attorneys to take on some of that work really encouraged him to get involved. He said one his one of his proudest moments at work was when he first got a green card in the mail that he helped obtain for a client, who was a survivor of domestic violence.

"We went through a multiyear process to apply for and finally obtain legal permanent residency status for her," Dewitz said. "And I can still remember getting the envelope in the mail, thinking I knew what it was, and I kind of felt in the envelope and could feel that there was the card inside."

He's likewise represented a political dissident from Zimbabwe and obtained asylum for a gay man fleeing persecution in his home country of Kazakhstan.

"When I came to the firm, I was definitely interested in doing as much good as I could from my small seat here in the world," Dewitz said.

— *As told to Theresa Schliep. Additional reporting by Tom Zanki, Charlie Innis and Bryan Koenig.*

*Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2022 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,350 submissions. Attorneys had to be under 40 as of April 30, 2022, to be eligible for this year's award. This interview has been edited and condensed.*